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S. M. Drach, Esq., F.R.S., &c. 'Claudius Ptolemy and the Nile,' by A. D. Cooley, Esq. Presented by the author. 'Die Planzen der Pfahlbauten,' von Dr. O. Heer. Presented by J. M. Ziegler, Esq. Continuations of Journals, Periodicals, &c.

ACCESSIONS TO THE MAP-ROOM SINCE THE LAST MEETING.—Sources of the Nile: copying of an ancient map by Girolamo de Verazano in 1492, preserved in the archives at Rome. Presented by Baron Jochmus. Second Part of Fullarton's 'Imperial Atlas of England and Wales,' on 2 sheets. Presented by the publishers. Map of Buenos Ayres, on 6 sheets, by Don Saturnino Salas, Hon. Corr. Mem. R.G.S., 2 copies. Presented by the author. Map of Jamaica, by J. Arrowsmith, Esq. Hypsometrical Map of Switzerland, with letter-press, by J. M. Ziegler, Hon. Corr. Mem. R.G.S. French Charts, 19 sheets. Ordnance Maps, 91 sheets.

The PRESIDENT said he had the pleasure of announcing that he had received from Australia much more favourable accounts than had heretofore come to hand of the progress of the expedition, led by Mr. M'Intyre, in search of the remains of Leichhardt's party. The news received a few weeks ago was very unfavourable, and led to the supposition that, as all the horses had perished, the expedition might have to be abandoned. It appeared that for many years there had never been such a drought as had occurred last year, in that part of Australia through which the expedition was proceeding, and the horses died absolutely from want of water. The camels, however, had been preserved, and the party had now reached a well-watered grass country; and having been again properly equipped, they were starting to go westward through a country in which it was expected they would meet no more obstacles. He mentioned this subject because the Council of the Geographical Society had advanced 200*l.* in aid of the search for the relics of that very notable expedition under Leichhardt, and possibly to assist in saving the lives of some of the party. Her Majesty the Queen was so much interested in this question that she had subscribed 100*l.* towards the same object. Other subscriptions (including one of 25*l.* from Mr. Cardwell, H.M. Colonial Secretary) had been received; and when these were announced in Australia they would go a great way in making the colonists feel the deep interest we took in any expedition which they had set their heart upon. It was always his endeavour to keep up, as much as possible, a right feeling between the great Australian colonies and our own country. The colonial Governments had indeed subscribed most munificently to support this expedition.

The following Papers were then read by the respective authors :—

1. *Notes on Peking and its Neighbourhood.* By W. LOCKHART, Esq.,
F.R.C.S.

THE author, who stated that he resided several years at Peking as surgeon in the hospital established to afford medical aid to the Chinese by the London Missionary Society, commenced his paper by an historical sketch of the city. He then gave a detailed account of its present state. In speaking of the annual visits of the tribu-

tary chiefs with their retinues, he first described the manners of the Mongolian visitors. The attendants bring with them large quantities of frozen game, also butter packed in the intestines of animals, and felted blankets made of wool and camels' hair. It was curious to see the Mongol officers prefer to have their camels' hair tents pitched in the court-yards of the houses allotted to them, and use the rooms of the houses themselves merely as outhouses, saying that the tents were warmer and more comfortable than the rooms. This embassy always came early in the winter. The next embassy in point of importance is the Korean. The ambassador is attended by about 200 officers, servants and traders, and the whole escort travels in carts from Korea round the head of the Gulf of Liautung, occupying 30 days on the journey. The traders bring for sale large quantities of the peculiar tough Korean paper, which is used for windows instead of glass, besides thick cotton-cloth and a large amount of gold-dust. They dress chiefly in light-coloured clothes, the officials in silk, and the traders in white calico, and their high-crowned broad-brimmed hats are beautifully made of very fine slips of bamboo, varnished black, and held together by horsehair; they also wear a kind of hair-net or cap made of beautifully worked horsehair.

The climate of Peking is very dry for the greater part of the year. Very little rain falls in the spring. In June, July, and August there are heavy thunder-showers and floods; in the autumn again there is but little rain, and from November to March no rain at all, and very little snow. The amount of annual rainfall is from 26 to 30 inches. The thermometer rises, in June and July, occasionally to 100° Fahr., the average maximum for these months being about 90°; and the greatest cold experienced during three winters was 6° below zero. During the winter the ice is usually two feet thick. The elaborate system of open watercourses and drains constructed by the first builders of the city are now in a ruinous condition, and no water runs through them.

The walls of the inner or Tartar city are built of large bricks, and consist of outside retaining walls enclosing a mass of earth and stones, which has a thick layer of concrete at the top, and this is covered with bricks. The wall thus constructed is 36 feet high, having a parapet of 6 feet on both sides. The breadth at the top varies from 40 to 52 feet, and is widest on the north side of the city. The circuit of the walls of the Tartar city is $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles; the extent from north to south $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles, and from east to west $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. There are nine gates; three in the south, and two in each of the other sides; the central south gate, or Meridian Gate, as it is called, is directly

opposite the great gate of the palace. The walls of the outer or Chinese city are not so large as those of the Tartar city; their extent from the south-east corner of the latter to the south-west corner is 10 miles, being $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles from south to north, and 5 miles east to west. The entire circumference of the walls enclosing the two cities is 20 miles, leaving out the south wall of the Tartar city, which forms part of the enclosure of the Chinese city. The walls of the Tartar city enclose two other so-called cities, which have their distinct walls one within the other. One is the Hwang ching, Yellow, or Imperial city, from the walls being coloured yellow, and inside this is the Tse Kin ching, Forbidden City, which occupies the centre of the whole, and in which is the winter palace or residence of the Emperor. The whole city is traversed from north to south by two long and very broad streets, one on each side of the palace, and from east to west by two other large streets, the intermediate spaces being crossed by an infinite number of narrow lanes. Private houses and shops with the richly carved and gilded fronts peculiar to Peking, line the principal streets, and next to the houses is a broad pathway. The carriage-road in the middle is elevated about two feet, and between this and the pathway, especially in the busy parts and near the cross roads, are rows of wooden huts and shops, which give the streets a mean appearance. The streets are not paved; in dry weather, therefore, they are extremely dusty, and in wet weather almost impassable from the depth of mud.

The author next described the chief temples of the city and neighbourhood—the Observatory, Examination Hall, Buddhist Monasteries, and the Summer Palace. Leaving Peking by the Stone Road, the first object that is seen is the lake and its islands, on which stand several temples. A long marble bridge of eighteen arches connects one island with the road, and in the neighbourhood are several magnificent bronze figures of various animals. The Imperial hunting-ground, or Hae-tsze, as it is called, is three miles outside the south gate of the Chinese city. It is a tract of country enclosed by a wall fifty miles long. Several villages lie in the enclosure, and herds of oxen, horses, and flocks of sheep are pastured for the use of the court. The draught animals used in Peking are camels, horses, asses, and mules. The camels are all of the Bactrian variety, and during the hot months are sent into Mongolia.

This paper will be printed *in extenso* in the Journal, vol. xxxvi.

The PRESIDENT thanked the author very much for the description he had given of the topography of the Chinese capital, especially as it was so admirably illustrated by the maps and plans which he exhibited to the Meeting. The paper, however, seemed to him to be rather of an ethnological or archaeological interest than geographical. The author mentioned

that there was a great deal of coal in the hills north of Peking, and that Sir Frederic Bruce had imported coal there from England. If Sir Frederic had been as good a geologist as our ambassadors ought to be, he would not have made such a mistake as to import coal into the neighbourhood of Peking. Twenty or thirty years ago a Russian geologist and miner described in detail the coal-beds of the district, and stated that they were of the same quality as British coal. He saw present Captain Sherard Osborn, who had been to Peking, and had recently returned from Bombay to England; and a gallant officer, Colonel Walker, who had also been in service in the same country; he was sure that the Meeting would be glad to hear any observations they might have to make.

Captain SHERARD OSBORN said he was a visitor at Peking at the time Mr. Lockhart was there, and was a witness of the opportunities the author of the paper had of making himself personally acquainted, not only with the city and its very interesting people, but with the circumjacent districts. To him (Captain Osborn) Peking was doubly interesting, because he was a firm believer in the theory that when we reached the heart of that wonderful country we should put an end to all the bloodshed and trouble with which we had been afflicted for years. The great statesman who lately presided over the destinies of this country, and the great diplomatist whom he (Captain Osborn) had the honour of once conducting to the neighbourhood of Peking, always laid that down as the principle of our action in regard to China. That they were not mistaken he felt sure soon after his arrival there. To him, as a sailor, it was exceedingly interesting to see merchants and missionaries quietly wandering about the city, ascertaining the wants of the people, and ministering to them in mind and body, without a single soldier to protect them, and guarded only by policemen. He hoped that Mr. Lockhart would some day publish a journal of his three years' residence in Peking; it would be one of the most valuable records we could have of the social condition of the people. He (Captain Osborn) agreed with the author of the paper that the whole of the belt of hills referred to was a great coal district. In the comparison of Indian and Chinese civilization nothing had struck him so much as the extraordinary progress the Chinese must have made in the two great essentials that marked the civilization of a people—namely, education, and intercommunication between different cities and districts. There was nothing more marvellous than the attention paid in China to communication, whether by canal or road. No one district is cut off from another for want of means of access. Though the English had been in India for 200 years, he had no hesitation in saying that China was 200 years a-head of India in respect to its communications. In education India was making great strides at the present day, and no doubt the Hindoo would soon pass the Chinaman; but the latter now had the advantage, as was obvious to any one who witnessed the preparations made at Peking to receive the elected scholar of all the scholardom of the 500,000,000 of China to be the prime minister of the country.

Colonel BEAUCHAMP WALKER enquired whether Mr. Lockhart could give any idea of the area of Peking and its population. He had formed an idea when in Peking that the population did not exceed 1,200,000. In the record of Macartney's mission it is put at about 3,000,000, but he (Colonel Walker) did not think that 3,000,000 people could have been crowded into Peking, comparing its size with that of London. All the houses were, with few exceptions, of only one storey; and the palaces in which the principal mandarins and the richer Chinese lived were built in courtyards occupying a large area.

Mr. LOCKHART stated that the entire area circumscribed by the walls shewn in the map was 20 English miles. As to the population he was of opinion

that from a million to a million and a half would be about correct. His own estimate was a million and a half.

Colonel WALKER said that was very near the estimate he had made. While he was in Peking the behaviour of the much maligned British soldier was so creditable that after the troops had been there about three weeks the people flocked into the city to an extent which might be called, not an *exodus* but an *inodus*; and it was afterwards said by the inhabitants, "You barbarians have been six weeks here, and no poor man has lost to the value of a farthing." Mr. Lockhart had adverted to the burning of the palace. That was simply a punishment to the emperor. It was his pet palace—the apple of his eye. The palace was burned without a single blow being inflicted on any Chinese, the only sufferer being the emperor himself, he being the instigator of the outrage which the burning of the palace was intended to avenge, as was proved by a letter under his own hand, which was discovered. Mr. Lockhart mentioned a very remarkable bell belonging to a large temple. He (Colonel Walker) was not sure that he was not the discoverer of that bell, having met with it in one of his morning rides. It was 9 feet high and 14 feet in circumference. The temple lay a short distance outside of Peking; and some idea of its size may be formed from the fact that it was intended to use it as the winter quarters of the whole of the British cavalry and infantry at Peking. He might mention, for the purpose of showing the state of Chinese civilization, that he found a printing-press with wood types in the city of Peking. No doubt China had been civilized for more than a thousand years, but their civilization was not of an advancing kind. The wall of Peking was 40 feet broad on the top, and allowed not only the passage of cavalry, but also of guns along it. Of all the dreary and filthy cities he had ever visited Peking was the dreariest and most filthy. The streets were very broad, but they were either knee-deep in mud or ankle-deep in dust, and the dust was very much of the same blue coaly colour as that of Aldershot.

2. *Notes of Travel in the Peninsula of Sinai.* By the Rev. F. W. HOLLAND.

MR. HOLLAND visited the Peninsula of Sinai in 1861, and again in 1865, travelling, on the latter occasion, with two friends, on foot and without a dragoman, so that he was able to diverge from the beaten paths, and examine many places that had previously escaped notice. In 1865 he left Suez, on the 22nd of February, and encamped that evening at Ayun Musa, which the writer of the article on "the Wilderness of the Wandering," in Dr. Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' has confounded with the wells of a similar name near Tor, and consequently tries in vain to reconcile the accounts of different travellers. Next day the party diverged from the usual track about eight miles south of Ayun Musa, and kept along the coast, where they found a considerable tract of land covered with grass, shrubs, and thickets of tamarisk. The most fertile portion is called Wady El Ahthi. On the 28th the party arrived at Wady Mughâra, where they were most hospitably received by Major McDonald, who had established himself there five years before, that he might re-open